

Sūrah Al-Faṭḥ

(The Victory)

Sūrah Al-Faṭḥ was revealed in Madīnah. It has 29 Verses and 4 Sections.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 3

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُبِينًا ﴿١﴾ لِيُغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا
تَأَخَّرَ وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيَكَ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ﴿٢﴾ وَيَنْصُرَكَ
اللَّهُ نَصْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣﴾

Surely, We have granted you an open victory, [1] so that Allah may forgive you of your previous and subsequent faults, and may complete His favour upon you, and may guide you to a straight path, [2] and so that Allah may support you with a mighty support. [3]

Preliminary Remarks

According to the consensus of scholarly opinion of Ṣaḥābah (Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ), Tabi'īn (Pupils of ṣaḥābah) and the leading authorities on Qur'ānic commentary, the Sūrah was revealed when, after signing the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was on his way back to Madīnah, in the 6th year of Hijrah in the month of Dhul Qa'dah. In other words, the Holy Prophet ﷺ with a party of his Companions set out for Makkah with the intention of performing the 'Umrah. When he approached the sanctuary of Makkah he halted at a place called Ḥudaibiyah.

The Quraish, however, debarred his entry into Makkah. Later they were willing to compromise that he must go back home that year and make up for the missed 'Umrah the following year. Many companions, especially Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ, were greatly upset but the Holy Prophet ﷺ accepted it under Divine direction because he felt that this would pave the way to Muslim success. The details are set out later in the Sūrah. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ put off his *Ihrām*, this Sūrah was revealed on his return journey from Ḥudaibiyah in which it is pointed out that his vision is true which will most certainly be fulfilled at the appropriate time. But this is not the right time for it. It will happen after the conquest of Makkah. The Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah in this Sūrah is described as "an open victory" because this Treaty was in fact the forerunner of the conquest of Makkah. Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ and some other Companions say "you think the conquest of Makkah is 'Victory'" but we regard "The very Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah as the real 'Victory'". Likewise Sayyidnā Jābir ؓ says "We think the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah is 'Victory'". Barā' Ibn 'Āzib says "You think 'Victory' refers to the conquest of Makkah. No doubt, it does, but we think the Pledge of Ridwān on the occasion of Ḥudaibiyah is the real 'Victory' where the Companions [some 1400] were asked by the Holy Prophet ﷺ under an acacia tree to declare on solemn oath that they would stand by him at all costs and would fight under his banner to the bitter end. The Pledge of *Jihād* is referred to later on in this Sūrah. (Ibn Kathīr) As mentioned earlier, this Sūrah was revealed on the occasion of Ḥudaibiyah, and since some parts of this incident are referred to in this Sūrah, it seems pertinent to first give details of this incident. Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr elaborates on the event and gives many small details. Tafsīr Maḥzarī develops it even more elaborately. He has, on this occasion, written about fourteen pages, narrating the story from the beginning to the end with reference to authentic collections of Ḥadīth. The narrative comprises many miracles, pieces of advice, and educational, religious and political points of wisdom. We intend to give the details of those parts of the narrative which are referred to in the Sūrah itself, or are profoundly relevant to the Sūrah, so that it may facilitate the understanding of those verses which are related to the incident. The details given below are mainly adopted from Tafsīr Maḥzarī, and reference is made to other commentaries from where other details are taken.

The Event of Ḥudaibiyah:

Ḥudaibiyah is a plain situated outside Makkah on the way to Jeddah which is very close to the boundaries of Ḥaram. It is now called *Shumaisiyy*. This is the site where the incident took place.

Part [1]: The Prophet's ﷺ Vision

It is reported by Ibn Jarīr, 'Abd Ibn Ḥumaid, Baihaqī, and others that the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw in a dream in Madīnah that he had gone to Makkah with his Companions, entered it peacefully and performed the 'Umrah (shorter pilgrimage). He and his Companions put off their pilgrim-garb and, according to the rule, some had their heads shaven and others had their hair cut short. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then entered the House of Allah, and the key of the House fell into his hand. This part of the event is referred to later on in this Sūrah [48:27]. The dream of the Prophets عليهم السلام is not a mere dream or fiction. It is a Divine revelation, acting upon which is necessary. Therefore, this vision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was not merely a dream, but a Divine inspiration which he had to strictly obey and follow. However, no time or date was specified for this. In fact, this vision was to be fulfilled at the time of the conquest of Makkah. But when the Holy Prophet ﷺ narrated this vision to his companions, they in their enthusiasm to visit Makkah and perform the *tawāf* (circumambulation) of the House, started preparations forthwith. When a party of the Companions was in full readiness to depart, the Holy Prophet ﷺ too made up his mind to accomplish his vision, since no time or date was specified, it is possible, he thought, that this purpose could be achieved instantly (Bayān-ul-Qur'ān, citing from Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī).

Part [2]: The Prophet ﷺ Invites his Companions and Bedouins to Join him: Some refused

It is reported on the authority of Ibn Sa'd and others that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Companions made up their mind to perform 'umrah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had the apprehension that the pagans of Makkah might hinder them from performing 'umrah, and it was possible also that an armed clash might ensue. Therefore, he invited people from the neighbouring villages to join him for the pilgrimage. Many of the village bedouins refused to join him claiming that Muḥammad ﷺ and his Companions wanted to push them into the jaws of death. They said that Muḥammad and his Companions wanted to get them into an armed clash

with Makkans who were superior to them in terms of weapons and power. They felt that as a result of this superiority, the Muslims would not come back alive (Maḏharī).

Part [3]: Setting out for Makkah

According to the versions of Imām Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd, Nasa'ī and others the Holy Prophet ﷺ before setting out for the journey, took a bath, put on his new clothes and mounted his camel Qaṣwā'. He was accompanied by his blessed wife 'Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها. A large number of the *Muhājirīn*, *Anṣār* and the village folks was with him. This constituted, according to most versions, 1400 people altogether. No one doubted that Makkah will be conquered on that day on account of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ vision, whereas they did not have any weapons except swords. The Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Companions set out for this journey on Monday at the beginning of Dhul-Qa'dah. He reached Dhul-Ḥulaifah and donned the pilgrim-robe with the intention of 'Umrah (Shortened from Maḏharī).

Part [4] : Preparing for Confrontation with Makkans

When the people of Makkah received news about the Prophet's ﷺ journey to Makkah with a large number of his Companions, they gathered together, and expressed their concern that if Muḥammad was allowed entry into Makkah, the entire Arabia would be under the impression that the Makkans were subdued by him, while several battles had been fought between them and Muḥammad. As such, they were not willing to allow him entry into the city. Thus they dispatched an advance cavalry towards Kura'-ul-Ghamīm under the command of Khālīd Ibn Walīd رضي الله عنه [who until then was not a Muslim] to intercept him. The neighboring villagers were also attached to the cavalry, and the tribe of Banū Thaḳīf from Ṭā'if joined them as well. They pitched their tents in a place called Baldaḥ. They pledged to debar the Holy Prophet ﷺ from entering into Makkah and to declare war against him.

A Strange and Simple Network of Communication

The enemies set up a network of communication from Baldaḥ to the place where the Holy Prophet ﷺ had reached. They placed a few men on the top of each mountain to observe the movement, activity and position of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and inform the people on the adjacent mountain in a loud voice, they in turn relayed the message to the people on the next

mountain, they would then convey the information to the third mountain, and so on. In this way they communicated the details of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ activities to the people of Baldah within a few minutes.

The Informants of Holy Prophet ﷺ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ dispatched Bishr Ibn Sufyān ؓ to Makkah in advance as a secret informer, so that he may secretly observe the activities and movements of the Quraish and keep him fully informed of their intentions and activities. When he returned from Makkah, he informed the Holy Prophet ﷺ that the Makkans were preparing for an all-out war. The Holy Prophet ﷺ expressed his regret that several wars had already weakened the strength of Quraish, and yet they would not give up fighting. The Prophet ﷺ said: "This was an ideal opportunity for them to leave me and the other Arabs alone. If these Arabs had vanquished me, they would have accomplished their objective without any pain; and if I had vanquished them, one of two things could have happened - either they would have embraced Islam or if they intended to fight me they would have braced themselves to face me. But nobody knows what is wrong with them! By Him who has sent me with His commands, I shall never cease to fight them until my neck is separated from the rest of my body."

Part [5]: The Camel of the Holy Prophet ﷺ Refuses to Move

After that the Holy Prophet ﷺ gathered the people and delivered a sermon in which he consulted them whether they should start the fight against the enemies then and there, or press forward and make forced entry into Makkah, and "if they debar us we shall fight them." Sayyidnā Abū Bakr ؓ and other companions said, "You have come out on a peaceful mission with the intention of visiting the House of Allah, not with the belligerent intention of fighting. Therefore, adhere to your peaceful intention. However, if anyone bars us from entering Makkah, then we shall fight." Sayyidnā Miqdād Ibn Aswad ؓ stood up and said: "O Allah's Messenger! We are not like the children of Israel who would say إِنْ هُنَا قَاعِدُونَ - {5:24} 'So go, you and your Lord, and fight. As for us, we are sitting here'. We shall fight with you at all costs." Having seen the Companions' determination, Allah's Messenger ﷺ responded that they should press forward in the direction of Makkah in the name of Allah. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ approached the Holy City,

and Khālīd Ibn Walīd ﷺ and his cavalry noticed them moving forward in the direction of *qiblah*, he arrayed his army into regiments and stood up there like adamantine walls. Allah's Messenger ﷺ appointed 'Abbād Ibn Bishr ﷺ as the commander of a unit that was arrayed in opposition to Khālīd Ibn Walīd. In the meanwhile it was time for *Ẓuhr Ṣalāh*. Sayyidnā Bilāl ﷺ called the *adhān*, and the Holy Prophet ﷺ led the congregation in prayer. Khālīd and his cavalry looked on. Later on Khālīd Ibn Walīd said: "We lost a golden opportunity to wipe them out whilst they were praying. It does not matter, wait for another time, because soon they will be praying again." But in the meantime Jibra'īl ﷺ brought down the injunction of *Ṣalāt-ul-Khawf*. Having made Allah's Messenger ﷺ aware of their intentions, he was shown how the army should be divided into two groups in times of danger. Allah's Messenger ﷺ followed the direction of the Qur'ān. Each group performed the prayer in alternation. (When one group prayed, it was guarded and protected by the armed regiment who remained on the alert for a possible attack by the enemy. It took its turn when the praying group had finished.)

Part [6] : A Miracle at Ḥudaibiyah

When Allah's Messenger ﷺ was nearing Ḥudaibiyah, the forelegs of his she-camel (named *Qaṣwā*) slipped and it sat down. The Companions tried to urge it up, but in vain. The Companions thought that *Qaṣwā* was enraged, but Allah's Messenger ﷺ said that it was no fault of *Qaṣwā* nor is it its usual habit to do this. In fact, it has been stopped by the same One who had blocked the men of elephant. [Probably Allah's Messenger ﷺ by then had discerned that the time was not up for the fulfillment of his vision.] With this discernment, Allah's Messenger ﷺ declared: "By Him in whose hand is Muḥammad's life, today I shall accept all the demands of the Quraish in which the Symbols sanctified by Allah are held in full esteem." Then he called out the she-camel and it stood up. Allah's Messenger ﷺ moved away from the spot where Khālīd Ibn Walīd ﷺ was staying, and stationed himself on the other side of Ḥudaibiyah where there was very little water. Khālīd Ibn Walīd and the people of *Baldah* had occupied the places where water was available in abundance. Here a miracle of Allah's Messenger ﷺ shown by Allah Ta'ālā. At this place there was a well in which very little water trickled. He rinsed his mouth in it, and got one of his arrows pitched therein. As soon as this happened, its

water bubbled almost up to the brim of the well. People on the upper side of the well drew water and quenched their thirst.

Part [7]: Negotiation with the Deputations of the People of Makkah

In this way all the Companions were satisfied and settled there, and started negotiations with the people of Makkah through their deputations. First, Budail Ibn Warqa' [who later on embraced Islam] along with his companions paid a visit to Allah's Messenger ﷺ and informed him, as a well-wisher, that the entire Makkah had come out in full force to confront him. They have occupied all the water spots. "They will never allow you to enter into Makkah." He said. Allah's Messenger ﷺ replied, "We have not come to fight anyone. However, if they block us from performing 'umrah, we will fight". Then he repeated what he had said to his spy Bishr : "Several wars have weakened the Quraish. If they wish, a peace treaty could be arranged for a specified period of time, so that they may peacefully prepare themselves. In the meantime they should leave us and the rest of the Arabs alone. If these Arabs vanquish me, they would have accomplished their objective without any pain; and if I vanquish them, and they started entering into the fold of Islam, then the Quraish will have two options: either they too will embrace Islam, or if they will intend to fight me, they will have braced themselves to face me. But if they refuse this, then I swear by Him who has sent me with His commands, I shall never cease to fight them until my neck is left separated from the rest of my body." Budail, saying that he will convey the message to the Quraish leaders, went back. When he returned to the Quraish and communicated the Holy Prophet's ﷺ response, some of them did not want to even hear him, and were in a fit of war, while others, like 'Urwah Ibn Mas'ud, the leader of his tribe, advised them to at least hear him. Then when Budail conveyed the message of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, 'Urwah said to the leaders of Quraish that Muḥammad's suggestions were fair and satisfactory, and therefore, they should be accepted. He opted to negotiate and asked for their permission to confer with the Holy Prophet ﷺ with the aim of reaching an agreement of peace. Thus the second person to pay a visit to the Holy Prophet ﷺ in an attempt to negotiate was 'Urwah who said to the Holy Prophet ﷺ: "If you wipe out your own people, the Quraish, will it be good for you? Have you ever heard anyone

destroying his own people?" Then there was a heated and protracted parleys between 'Urwah and the Companions, and while this was going on, 'Urwah observed that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ performed his ablutions, his companions would not allow the water to fall on the ground but would rub it on their bodies and clothes. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ spoke, they would lower their voices. 'Urwah went back to the Quraish leaders, and described the whole scenario to them, adding that "I have been to the courts of the Caesar and Khosroes, and the Negus also, but by God, never have I seen any people so devoted to a king as are the Companions of Muḥammad to him. He is suggesting a correct proposal, and I suggest that you accept it." But the people replied that they could not accept it; "Muḥammad must go back this year, and may come again the following year." When 'Urwah's suggestion was not accepted, he returned with his people. After him a person by the name of Jalis Ibn 'Alqamah, the leader of the bedouins, visited the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He saw the Companions in pilgrim-robcs with sacrificial animals. He too returned and explained to his people that these people had come to perform their 'Umrah in the House of Allah. "It is not proper in any way to debar them." The people did not pay heed to his suggestion either. He too went away back with his deputation. A fourth person arrived to confer with the Holy Prophet ﷺ and persuade him to give up his intention to enter Makkah. But the Holy Prophet ﷺ repeated the same reply to this deputation that he had made to Budail and 'Urwah. He went back to Quraish and communicated the Holy Prophet's ﷺ reply to them.

Part [8] : Sayyidnā 'Uthmān Despatched as a Special Envoy

Imām Baihaqī reports on the authority of 'Urwah Ibn Zubair ؓ that when Allah's Messenger ﷺ settled in Ḥudaibiyah, it unnerved the Quraish. He decided to send an envoy with the message that he had not come to fight, but to perform 'Umrah. Therefore, they should not block his way. He called upon Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ for this task. He said, "Quraish are my implacable enemy, because they are fully aware of my ardent support for Islam, and there is not a single member of my tribe in Makkah that will support me. As a result, I will not be able to change their mind. I propose the name of 'Uthmān for this task. He is the most appropriate person who, because of his tribe, holds a special power and honour in the whole of Makkah." Allah's Messenger ﷺ accepted the proposal and sent

off Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ؓ for the task. He also advised him to visit the socially and economically disabled Muslim men and women who were not able to migrate from Makkah and were suffering hardships. He was to console them that they should not be distressed. Soon, Allah willing, Makkah will be conquered and their difficulties will end. First, Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ؓ went to those people who had gathered in Balḍah to block the way of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and confront him. He communicated to them the same message that was conveyed to them by Budail and 'Urwah. They replied that they had heard the message and that it was not acceptable. Having received their reply, he attempted to get into Makkah. Abān Ibn Sa'īd [who later on embraced Islam] met him and welcomed him warmly. He took him into his refuge and allowed him to convey his message anywhere in Makkah without any fear of hindrance. Then he gave his mount to Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ؓ which he rode and entered Makkah, because his tribe Banū Sa'īd was eminently powerful.

Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ؓ met each one of the Quraish leaders, and conveyed the Holy Prophet's ﷺ message: "We have not come to fight, but to perform *'umrah*. After completing the rites of pilgrimage we shall return home. Indeed, if the road is blocked, we shall fight. Quraish themselves have been debilitated by several wars. Therefore it would be to their advantage to leave us and other Arabs alone. Then we shall see who overpowers the other. If the Arabs overpower us, then their objective would be accomplished. If we overpower them, then too they will have a choice to fight at that stage. During this time they will have the opportunity to improve and preserve their strength." But they rejected his proposal. Then 'Uthmān ؓ visited the helpless Muslims and conveyed to them the Holy Prophet's ﷺ message. This communication pleased them immensely, and they asked him to convey their *salam* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Having communicated the Holy Prophet's ﷺ message, the Makkans allowed Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ؓ to perform the *ṭawāf* of the House if he wished. But he refused saying he would not do that unless the Holy Prophet ﷺ would have first performed it. 'Uthmān ؓ stayed in Makkah for three nights, and continued to invite the Quraish leaders to accept the Holy Prophet's ﷺ message.

Part [9] : Tension between Quraish and Muslims: Seventy Makkans Captured

In the meanwhile Quraish selected fifty men and asked them to be on

the look-out for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As soon as they find an opportunity, their task was to assassinate him. Whilst the men were on the look-out for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Muḥammad Ibn Maslamah ؓ, the Holy Prophet's ﷺ body-guard, captured them and brought them to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. On the other hand, Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ؓ was already in Makkah and ten more Muslims joined him in the Holy City. When the Quraish heard that fifty of their men have been captured, they detained 'Uthmān ؓ and other Muslims. A cavalry of Quraish marched towards the Muslim caravan and shot arrows and threw stones at them. One Companion - Ibn Zanīm by name - was martyred. The Muslims captured ten of the Quraish horse-riders. In the meantime a rumour reached the Holy Prophet ﷺ that 'Uthmān ؓ has been assassinated.

Part [10] : The Pledge of Riḍwān

Having received this rumour, the Holy Prophet ﷺ gathered his Companions under an acacia tree and took a solemn pledge from them that they would fight the Quraish to the last breath of their lives. This pledge came to be known as *bai'at-ur-Riḍwān*, which signified those lucky people who had taken the oath had obtained Allah's pleasure. This is referred to later on in the Sūrah. Authentic Prophetic Traditions speak eminently of the people who participated in this pledge. Since 'Uthmān ؓ was on a mission to Makkah under the direction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he was absent at the time of the solemn pledge. So the Holy Prophet ﷺ placed one of his own hands on the other hand of his and said, "This is 'Uthmān's pledge." This illustrates the distinction of Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ؓ.

Part [11] : Peace Treaty at Ḥudaibiyah

A distinct event or episode of the scenario of Ḥudaibiyah is that through, the grace of Allah, the Quraish were overawed and subdued by the Muslims. As a result, they themselves were then willing to make peace. Thus they sent three of their men as representatives, namely, Suhail Ibn 'Amr, Ḥuwaitib Ibn 'Abdul 'Uzzā and Mikraz Ibn Ḥafṣ. (Later the first two of the representatives embraced Islam.) They apologised to the Holy Prophet ﷺ on behalf of their people. Suhail Ibn 'Amr said to the Holy Prophet ﷺ "The report that 'Uthmān ؓ and his companions have been killed is absolutely false. They are being sent to you. Set free our men you have captured." The Holy Prophet ﷺ set them free. It is

recorded in Musnad of Aḥmad and Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim on the authority of Sayyidnā Anas ؓ that verse 24 of this Sūrah كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ refers to this episode. Then Suhail and his deputation went to Quraish and described to them the amazing scene of *bai'at-ur-Riḍwān* where the *ṣaḥābah* showed their readiness to lay down their lives and willingness to make the supreme sacrifice. The opinion-makers of Quraish suggested that nothing would be better for them than they would compromise on Muslims' retiring that year without entering Makkah, but the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Companions may visit Makkah the following year only for three days to perform 'Umrah. On that occasion they may slaughter the sacrificial animals and put off their pilgrim-robcs, otherwise the impression created would be that attempts were made to block the Holy Prophet's ﷺ way, but he forced his entry into Makkah, which would be tantamount to a humiliating defeat for them. When Suhail arrived again with message, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "It seems that Quraish has decided to make peace. That is why they have sent Suhail again." The Holy Prophet ﷺ sat up cross-legged. Two of his Companions, 'Abbād Ibn Bishr and Salamah, رضى الله عنهم اجمعين armed themselves with weapons and stood on his sides to guard him. Suhail came, whilst sitting courteously in front of him, delivered the message of Quraish. The Companions generally were not happy to put off the pilgrim-garb without performing 'Umrah. They spoke harshly to Suhail - the voices sometimes became loud and at other times low. 'Abbād Ibn Bishr ؓ reprimanded Suhail for raising his voice in the presence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. After heated and protracted parleys, the Holy Prophet ﷺ agreed to enter into Peace Treaty. Suhail wanted to have the Peace Treaty reduced to writing. The Holy Prophet ﷺ called Sayyidnā 'Alī ؓ and dictated to him to write the words, بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ *bismil-lāhir-raḥmanir-raḥīm*. Suhail objected to this - saying that the words *rahmān* and *rahīm* do not exist in our idiom. He said they should write the words that used to be written before, that is, بِسْمِکَ اللّٰهُمَّ *bismika-allāhumma*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ agreed to this and asked Sayyidnā 'Alī ؓ to erase the بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ *bismil-lāhir-raḥmanir-raḥīm* and insert بِسْمِکَ اللّٰهُمَّ *bismika-allāhumma*. Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked Sayyidnā 'Alī ؓ to write "This is the Peace Treaty into which Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allah entered." Suhail objected to this as well, and argued that they did not recognise him as the 'Messenger of Allah'. If they had, they would never have prevented

him from visiting Allah's House. There should be no such expression in the Treaty that would be in defiance of any party's belief system. Therefore, it should read Muḥammad, the son of 'Abdullāh. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ granted this and dictated to Sayyidnā 'Alī ؑ to erase the words, 'the Messenger of Allah' and replace it with 'the Son of 'Abdullāh.' Sayyidnā 'Alī ؑ, despite being an embodiment of obedience, said he could not erase the attributive title *rasūl* [Messenger] of Allah from his name. Sayyidnā 'Usaid Ibn Ḥuḍair and Sa'd Ibn 'Ubadah ؑ withheld Sayyidnā 'Alī's ؑ hand so that he might not rub the attributive title out. He should not write any appellation with his name other than the *rasūl* [Messenger] of Allah. "If they do not accept it, then the sword will decide the matter" they said. Voices arose all around. Despite the fact that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was an Umī who had never written before, took the document in his hand and wrote with his own pen the following preamble:

هذا ما قاضى محمد بن عبد الله وسهيل بن عمر واصلحا على وضع الحرب عن
الناس عشر سنين يأمن فيه الناس ويكف بعضهم عن بعض

"This is the Treaty into which Muḥammad the Son of 'Abdullāh and Suhail Ibn 'Amr entered. They agree that war shall be suspended for ten years, during which time people would be able to live peacefully and no party would indulge in any hostility against the other."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted that the treaty should have a clause to the effect that the Muslims would not be hindered from performing *ṭawāf* that year, but Suhail swore by God to say that it was not possible. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ conceded that to him. Suhail then inserted his own clause: if a Makkan [even if he is a believer] were to go over to Muḥammad ﷺ without his guardian's permission, he shall be sent back to his guardian; but should any of Muḥammad's followers return to the Quraish, he shall not be sent back. At this, the common Muslims raised their voices and exclaimed that it was not tolerable to send one of their own Muslim brethren back to the pagans. However, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ accepted this clause as well, and explained that if any of the believers is gone over to the Quraish of his own accord, Allah has distanced him from the Muslims, and they should not bother about him. If any of their men comes over to the Muslims and they send him back to

the pagans, Allah will pave the way for him.

Sayyidnā Barā' ؓ summarises that the Treaty contained three clauses: [1] If anyone during that period from among the Quraish went over to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, without his guardian's permission, he would return him to them; [2] if a Companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ came over to the Quraish, they would not return him; and [3] the Holy Prophet ﷺ, together with his men, should retire that year, and visit Makkah the following year only for three days to perform 'Umrah, but they shall carry no arms save sheathed swords. Towards the end of the Treaty, the concluding statement was appended: "This Agreement between the people of Makkah and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is a guarded document which none shall violate. Whosoever would like to join the Holy Prophet ﷺ and make himself a party to the Treaty from his side, shall have the liberty to do so; and likewise whosoever would like to join the Quraish and make himself a party to the Treaty from their side, shall have the liberty to do so."

As soon as this proclamation was made, Banū Khuza'ah jumped at the opportunity, and entered into alliance with the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but Banū Bakr, on the other hand, sided with the Quraish and allied themselves with them.

Terms and Provisions of the Treaty Upset the Companions

The Muslims were noticeably perturbed over the terms of the Treaty that were apparently tilted against their interests. Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ exclaimed in extreme grief and indignation: "O Messenger of Allah! are you not the True Prophet of Allah?" He replied: "Why not!" Then Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ asked: "Are we not on the right path and they on the wrong?" He replied: "Why not!" Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ asked: "Is it not a fact that our martyrs are in the Paradise and their slain ones in the Fire?" He replied: "Why not!" Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ then said: "Why should we submit to this humiliation and return without observing 'Umrah or Allah decides the matter through war?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied: "I am the servant of Allah and His Messenger. I can never violate His command. He will never destroy me. He is my Helper. Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ posed more questions to the Prophet ﷺ: "O Messenger of Allah! did you not promise us that we would visit Allah's House and perform *ṭawāf*?" He replied: "Yes, indeed, I did promise, but did I promise that it will happen this

year?" Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ replied: "No, you did not promise that." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ responded: "The event will definitely happen as I promised. You will visit the House and perform the *tawāf*."

Sayyidnā 'Umar Ibn Khaṭṭāb ؓ kept quiet, but his grief and indignation did not subside. After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he went to Sayyidnā Abū Bakr ؓ and repeated his questions to him as he had posed them to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He replied that the Prophet ﷺ is the servant of Allah and His Messenger. He is not at liberty to violate any Divine decree. Allah is his Helper. Therefore, hold on to his stirrup until the last breath of your life. By Allah! he is on the path of Truth. In short, Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ was in intense grief and pain because of the seemingly unfavourable terms and provisions of the Treaty. In fact, he is reported to have said: "I never gave way to doubt since I embraced Islam, but on this occasion I could not avoid it." (Transmitted by Bukhārī) Sayyidnā Abū 'Ubaidah ؓ allayed his misgivings and suggested to seek refuge with Allah from the evils of Shaiṭān. Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ said: "I seek refuge in Allah from the evils of the Shaiṭān." He says that since he realised his misgivings, he continued to observe voluntary prayers, keep voluntary fasts, emancipate slaves and give alms, so that Allah may pardon his error.

The Case of Abū Jandal: The Prophet's Commitment to the Treaty

The terms and provisions of the Treaty had just been concluded, and Companions were still grieving over them. Suhail Ibn 'Amr was the chief negotiator on behalf of Quraish. Abū Jandal was Suhail's son. He embraced Islam and was imprisoned by his father. He used to persecute him harshly; fetters were put about his ankles; and there were signs of violence on his body. He could not bear the persecution, so somehow he managed to escape to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and sought asylum. Some of the Muslims went forward and granted him the asylum. Suhail yelled out: "This is the first instance of the violation of a proviso of the Treaty. If he is not returned, I shall never accept any of the other provisions in the document". The Holy Prophet ﷺ had already entered into the Treaty and was bound by its terms and provisions, therefore he called Abū Jandal and asked him to be patient for a little while longer. Soon Allah will pave the way for him and other helpless Muslims, who are detained in

Makkah, to live in easier circumstances and in a peaceful atmosphere. This case of Abū Jandal really rubbed salt into the wound or added fuel to the fire. The Companions were sure that Makkah will be conquered instantaneously, but when they experienced the apparently unfavourable situation, their grief and disappointment knew no bounds. They were on the brink of disaster and ruination. However, the Treaty was concluded, and on behalf of the Muslims Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Abdur-Raḥmān Ibn 'Awf, 'Abdullāh Ibn Suhail Ibn 'Umar, Sa'd Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, Muḥammad Ibn Maslamah, 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib and others رضى الله عنهم اجمعين had appended their signatures. Likewise on behalf of the idolaters, Suhail and a few others appended their signatures.

Putting Off the Pilgrim-Garb and Slaughtering the Sacrificial Animals

When the document was finalised, the Holy Prophet ﷺ addressed the Companions, and asked them to slaughter their sacrificial animals in that very place, shave their heads and put off the pilgrim-robcs, but they were so overwhelmed by grief that no one moved from his position to comply. This depressed the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and he went up to his blessed wife Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها and expressed his grief to her. She gave him the most apt advice, saying: "Do not reprimand them at this time, because they are acutely grieved by the terms of the Treaty and by returning without observing 'Umrah. Call the barber in the presence of all, and get your own head shaved, put off your pilgrim-garb and slaughter your own camel." He followed her advice. When the Companions saw this, they followed suit. They started shaving each other's head, slaughtered their animals and put off their pilgrim-robcs. The Holy Prophet ﷺ earnestly supplicated for all.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ stayed on the plain of Ḥudaibiyah for nineteen days and, according to other versions, twenty days. He then started his return journey. With his Companions he first went to Marr Ṣahrān, and then arrived in 'Uṣfān. When they reached here, their provisions were depleted: very little food and water had been left for them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ spread a dining-sheet and asked everyone to put the little they had on the sheet. In this way the left-overs were collected on the sheet. There were 1400 people: they all sat around the sheet, the Holy Prophet ﷺ supplicated and asked them to eat. The noble Companions

report that 1400 people ate to the full and in addition they filled their bowls - yet nothing had diminished. This was the Holy Prophet's second miracle that appeared on this plain. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, seeing this, was highly delighted.

The Noble Companions' Strength of Faith and Obedience of the Holy Prophet ﷺ Tested Once Again

It was noticed in the foregoing sections that the Companions were extremely unhappy at the terms and provisions of the Treaty. They found it even more difficult and painful to return without performing 'Umrah or fighting a war. It was their strength of faith that despite all odds and the awkward situation, they persisted in their faith in and obedience of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. On his way back from Hudaibiyah, at Kura'-ul-Ghamīm Sūrah Al-Fath was revealed which the Prophet ﷺ recited to the blessed Companions. Despite the terms and provisions of the Treaty and returning home without 'Umrah wounding their hearts, this Sūrah calls the trip "a manifest Victory". Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ could hardly contain himself and inquired: "Messenger of Allah! is this 'victory'?" He replied: "By Him in whose Hand is my life, this is indeed 'a manifest Victory'!" The noble Companions submitted to him and thus were assured that it was "a manifest Victory".

The Effects and Advantages of the Treaty

One immediate effect of this Treaty was that the misplaced obstinacy of Quraish and their followers became manifest, and a schism arose among themselves, and they were divided into different groups as a result of differences in thinking and attitudes. Budail Ibn Warqā' separated himself with his comrades from the Quraish. Following his example, 'Urwah Ibn Mas'ūd separated with his group.

Secondly, the Quraish of Makkah were highly impressed by the unparalleled self-sacrifice of the noble Companions. They were also profoundly touched by the unwavering obedience of, and love and reverence for, the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This inclined them to make peace. This was an ideal opportunity for them to wipe out the Muslims, because they were at home with all its conveniences, and the Muslims were on a journey with all its inconveniences. The Quraish had captured all the water spots, whereas the Muslims had to occupy waterless spots - lacking in foodstuffs. They were in full force, whereas the Muslims were

ill-equipped in weaponry. Allah infused terror into their hearts. Many members of their group had the opportunity to meet and mingle with the Holy Prophet ﷺ, as a result the cheerfulness of Islamic faith was infused into their hearts. Later on they embraced it.

Thirdly, the Peace Treaty made the road safe and secure. The way was opened for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the blessed Companions to call the people towards Islam. Arab delegations visited the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The blessed Companions, together with the Holy Prophet ﷺ, spread Islam rapidly in every nook and corner. Letters were sent to the rulers of the world - inviting them to the call of Islam. Some of the prominent rulers were impressed. On the occasion of Ḥudaibiyah, there were not more than 1500 Muslims with him, despite the Holy Prophet's ﷺ general invitation for all Muslims to join him to observe 'Umrah. But after the Treaty, people entered Allah's religion in throngs. In the year 7 Hijri Khaibar was conquered, and considerable amount of booty fell into the hands of the Muslims. This strengthened their material power. Hardly two years had passed during which time an unprecedented large number of people joined the Islamic camp. When the Quraish violated the terms of the Treaty, the Holy Prophet ﷺ secretly started preparing for the conquest of Makkah. The Quraish came to know about this, and were unnerved. They sent Abū Sufyān to apologise and to negotiate the renewal of the Treaty, but the Holy Prophet ﷺ refused. As a result of violation by the Quraish of the terms of the Treaty, the Holy Prophet ﷺ within twenty-one months marched towards Makkah with ten thousand strong faithful soldiers of Allah. The Quraish were so overwhelmingly subdued that no fighting took place. There are differing views among the leading jurists whether Makkah was conquered by force of arms or by peaceful means. Nevertheless while in Makkah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had the following announcement made: "Whoever shuts his door shall be safe; whoever enters the mosque shall be safe; whoever enters Abū Sufyān's house shall be safe." This announcement made them concerned about saving themselves. This, on the part of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, was a master-stroke of political sagacity, strategy and ingenuity. As a result, no fighting took place. In sum, Makkah was conquered easily and very comfortably. Thus the Holy Prophet's ﷺ vision turned into a reality. The Companions fearlessly performed the *ṭawāf* of the House, then had their heads shaved or cut short, the Holy Prophet ﷺ, together with his Companions, then entered the Ka'bah where he received its keys. At that

moment, the Holy Prophet ﷺ addressed Sayyidnā 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ in particular and other Companions in general, saying: "This is the incident that I have been narrating to you." On the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet ﷺ repeated his address to Sayyidnā 'Umar Ibn Khaṭṭāb ؓ who replied: "Undoubtedly there is no better and greater 'Victory' than the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah." Sayyidnā Abū Bakr ؓ believed from the very outset that the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah was indeed the 'Victory', but people did not have the insight and foresight to discern the reality that was determined between Allah and His Messenger. Allah does not do anything because of people's impatience. Instead, He does what His wisdom demands that everything should take place at the right moment. Therefore, 'a manifest Victory' in this Sūrah refers to the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah.

These were the most important elements of the event of Ḥudaibiyah. This will facilitate the understanding of forthcoming verses of this Sūrah.

Analysis of Verses

لِيُغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ (so that Allah may forgive you of your previous and subsequent faults...." - 48:2). If the particle "*lam*" (translated above as 'so that') is taken to be for "*ta'līl*", it indicates the purpose for which, and the reason why, such a manifest Victory is given to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is mentioned in this verse that the victory was given to him to bless him with three different bounties. The first bounty is forgiveness of all his past and future shortcomings. Attention was drawn in Sūrah Muḥammad that all Prophets عليهم السلام are infallible. Wherever words like *dhanb* ذنب and عَصِيَان *'iṣyān* ('sin' or 'fault') are attributed to them in the Qur'ān, they are in relation to their lofty status. Works that are merely unadvisable contrary to the preferred practice are also referred to as *dhanb* in relation to the high status of the Prophets by way of reprimand. 'Previous' refers to shortcomings committed before conferment of prophethood, and 'subsequent' refers to shortcomings committed after the conferment of prophethood (Maḥzarī). The reason why this victory caused forgiveness for such shortcomings is that large masses of people entered the fold of Islam after it, and naturally the credit of spreading the call of Islam goes to the Holy Prophet ﷺ for which he deserved the divine reward, and an increase in reward always entails forgiveness of the shortcomings.

وَيَهْدِيكَ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ("...and may guide you to a straight path," 48:2.)

This is the second bounty which resulted from the manifest victory. Here arises a question of the highest significance: The Holy Prophet ﷺ was established in the right path from the very outset. Not only was he himself on the right path, but also a source of guidance for the entire world. His night-and-day preoccupation was to call the people towards the Straight Path. So what then is the meaning of guidance to the straight path through manifest victory in the 6th year of Hijrah? A detailed answer to this question can be found in Ma'āriful-Qur'ān Vol 1/pp 71-81 - particularly look at the definitions and the three degrees of Hidāyah [guidance].

Definition of Hidāyah

Hidāyah has been defined as to show the path or to lead someone gently and kindly towards his destination. The real destination of man is to attain Allah's pleasure and his proximity. The degrees of pleasure and proximity are unlimited. Having attained the first degree, man needs to go for the next one, then he should aim for the third one and so on to no end. Not any man, Muslim, saint or prophet is above the need of such spiritual and moral attainment. Therefore, the instruction to pray for right guidance in the first Sūrah is not only to the Muslim Community, but also to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He is to soar higher and higher in the path of spiritual and moral attainment. Allah has, in this manifest victory, raised the Holy Prophet ﷺ to the highest pinnacles of spiritual eminence which is described by the clause *yahdiyaka*.

وَيَنْصُرَكَ اللَّهُ نَصْرًا عَظِيمًا (and so that Allah may support you with a mighty support - 48:3.) This is the third bounty which follows naturally from the preceding circumstance of the manifest victory. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has always had help from Allah, but on this occasion he received a very large share.

Verses 4 - 7

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ
إِيمَانِهِمْ ۖ وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا
﴿٤﴾ لِيَدْخُلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَيُكَفَّرُ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ ۖ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا

﴿٥﴾ وَيُعَذِّبُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكَاتِ
الظَّالِمِينَ بِاللَّهِ ظَنُّ السَّوْءِ ۖ عَلَيْهِمْ ذَائِرَةُ السَّوْءِ ۖ وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَعَنَهُمْ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٦﴾ وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٧﴾

He (Allah) is such that He sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers, so that they grow more in faith along with their (existing) faith - And to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise - [4] so that He admits the believing men and the believing women to the gardens beneath which rivers flow, to live therein for ever, and so that He may write off their evil deeds and that is a great achievement in Allah's sight, [5] and so that He may punish the hypocrites, men and women, and the *mushriks*, men and women, who think evil thoughts about Allah. Upon them there is a vicious circle, and Allah has become angry with them, and He has prepared *Jahannam* for them, and it is an evil destination. [6] And to Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth. And Allah is Mighty, Wise. [7]

Bounties of Allah upon the Participants of Ḥudaibiyah

In the first three verses of this Sūrah, reference was made to Allah's particular bounties bestowed upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the wake of the manifest victory. Some of the participants of Ḥudaibiyah congratulating the Holy Prophet ﷺ, asked him that the favours are conferred exclusively upon him, but what is there in it for them? In response to this query, verses 4-7 were revealed. They distinctly refer to the good graces of Allah upon the participants of Ḥudaibiyah and the Pledge of Ridwān. These favours were generously bestowed upon them because of faith in, and obedience to, the Holy Prophet ﷺ. All believers whose faith and obedience are complete and perfect will receive similar good graces of Allah.

Verses 8 - 10

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿٨﴾ لِّتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ

وَتُعْزِرُوهُ وَتُقِرُّوهُ ۖ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
يُيَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُيَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ ۖ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۖ فَمَنْ نَكَثَ
فَإِنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ فَمِيسُورَتُهُ
أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٠﴾

Indeed, We have sent you (O Prophet,) as a witness and as a bearer of good news and as a warner, [8] so that you (O people,) believe in Allah and His Messenger, and support him and revere him, and pronounce His (Allah's) purity morning and evening. [9] Those who pledge allegiance with you by placing their hands in your hand they, in fact, pledge allegiance with Allah. Allah's hand is over their hands. Then, whoever breaks his pledge breaks it to his own detriment, and whoever fulfils the covenant he has made with Allah, He will give him a great reward. [10]

Injunctions and Related Considerations

In the preceding verses, Allah referred to the favours he bestowed generously upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his *Ummah*, especially upon those who participated in the pledge of Ridwān. The Bestower of the favours is Allah and the medium is the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, in the current set of verses, the right of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the obligation of the *Ummah* to honour and revere him is entrenched. First, three attributes of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are referred to: *shāhid*, *mubashshir*, *nadhīr*. *Shāhid* means 'witness' and its sense here is the same as that of *shahid* which occurs in [4:41].

كَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَىٰ هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا

"How would it, then, be when We shall bring a witness from every community and shall bring you over them as a witness.

Both forms of the word mean "a witness". Every Prophet will bear testimony to the fact that he has delivered Allah's message to his particular community - some accepted and others rejected. See Ma'ariful Qur'an, Vol 2/pp 442-3 for details. Likewise the Holy Prophet ﷺ will bear witness for his community. Qurtubī writes under [4:41] that the prophets' testimony will be for the people of their respective time as to who accepted

their call to the Truth and who defied it. Likewise the Holy Prophet's ﷺ testimony will be for the people of his particular time. Other scholars express the view that the Holy Prophet ﷺ will bear witness to the entire community's good and bad works, and to its obedience and defiance, because, according to some versions, angels present to the Holy Prophet ﷺ morning and evening the works of the community. Thus he is aware of the entire community's works.

Mubashshir and *Nadhīr*: *Mubashshir* connotes bearer of good tidings and *nadhīr* means a warner. That is to say, he gives glad tidings of Paradise to the believing and obedient sector of the community. On the other hand, he is a Warner to those who rejected the message - making them aware of the punishment of such defiance. Further, the purpose of sending the Messenger has been indicated - that is, to believe in Allah and his Messenger. In addition, it is mentioned that the believers must be characterized by three more qualities:

- [1] that they should "support him"
- [2] "and revere him"; and
- [3] "pronounce His (Allah's) purity morning and evening."

The first phrase contains a verb which is derived from the infinitive or verbal noun *ta'zīr* which denotes to help or support. Punishment is also called *ta'zīr* because the idea underlying punishment is to give real help to the criminal by punishing him (Rāghib: Mufradatul Qur'ān). The second phrase contains a verb which is derived from the infinitive or verbal noun *tawqīr* which means to show reverence. The third phrase contains a verb which is derived from the infinitive or verbal noun *tasbīḥ* which connotes to declare the purity of Allah. In this phrase, the third person anaphoric pronoun attached to the verb refers, by consensus of Qur'ānic grammarians, to "Allah", and there can be no other possibility. Therefore, most of them believe that the third person anaphoric pronouns attached to the respective verbs of the first two phrases also refer to "Allah". From this point of view, the three phrases mean: believe in Allah and help His religion and His Messenger, revere Him and pronounce His purity.

Other scholars refer the third person anaphoric pronouns attached to the verbs of the first two phrases to the "Messenger". From this point of view, the phrases mean: Help the Messenger and revere him; and

pronounce the purity of Allah. However, there is a third group of scholars who feel that in this interpretation there is *intishār-ud-damā'ir* or unconcentrated distribution of pronouns - leading to pronominal ambiguity and vagueness, and making it difficult to follow the meaning of the constructions which is not in conformity with the rules of Arabic rhetoric or *'ilm-ul-balāghah*. Allah knows best.

After that, there is reference to the pledge of Ridwān which was narrated in part [10] of the story of Ḥudaibiyah. The purpose of the believers in entering into the pledge at the hands of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was to act upon the command of Allah and to receive His good pleasure. Therefore, when the blessed Companions placed their hands on the hand of the Holy Prophet ﷺ it was tantamount to taking the pledge at the hands of Allah. 'Allah's hand' is in any case something falling in the category of *mutashābihāt* the correct nature of which is cannot be known to us, nor should we attempt to investigate its reality. The significance of the pledge of Ridwān is described later in the Sūrah. The word *bai'ah*, lexically, connotes a pledge to do some particular work. The ancient and traditional method of this pledge is for the pledging parties to place their hands upon each other, although the placing of hands is not a necessary condition. Nevertheless once the pledge is consummated, juristically it is binding, and its violation is unlawful. Therefore, it is later laid down that whoever violates the pledge will cause loss to himself. It will not cause loss to Allah and His Messenger. Whoever fulfils the terms of the pledge will receive a mighty reward from Allah.

Verses 11 - 14

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ شَغَلَتْنَا أَمْوَالُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا
فَاسْتَغْفِرْنَا ۖ يَقُولُونَ بِالسِّنْتِهِمْ مَّا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ ۖ قُلْ فَمَنْ
يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ ضَرًّا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًا ۖ بَلْ
كَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١١﴾ بَلْ ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ لَنْ يَنْقَلِبَ الرَّسُولُ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِيهِمْ أَبَدًا وَزَيَّنَ ذَلِكَ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَظَنَنْتُمْ ظَنًّا
السَّوْءَ ۖ وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا بُورًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَمَنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ

فَإِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَعِيرًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ط
يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ ط وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٤﴾

Those of the Bedouins who remained behind will say to you, "Our possessions and our families kept us busy, (hence we could not accompany you in your journey to Hudaibiyah). So, pray to Allah for our forgiveness." They say with their tongues what is not in their hearts. Say, "Then, who has power to avail you in any thing against Allah, if He intends to do you harm, or intends to do you good? Rather, Allah is fully aware of what you do. [11] No, but you thought that the Messenger and the believers would never ever return to their families, and it seemed good to your hearts, and you thought an evil thought and became a ruined people." [12] And if one does not believe in Allah and His Messenger, then We have prepared a blazing fire for the disbelievers. [13] And to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He forgives whomsoever He wills, and punishes whomsoever He wills. And Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [14]

Related Considerations

Reference in this passage is to those Bedouin tribes who were invited by Allah's Messenger ﷺ to join the party of 1400 Muslims who were marching to Hudaibiyah but on one pretext or another, they requested to be excused. This was narrated in part [1] of the story of Hudaibiyah. According to some versions, some of those people later repented and became sincere Muslims.

Verses 15 - 17

سَيَقُولُ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ إِذَا انْطَلَقْتُمْ إِلَى مَغَانِمَ لِتَأْخُذُوهَا ذَرُونَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ
يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُبَدِّلُوا كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ط قُلْ لَّن تَتَّبِعُونَا كَذَلِكُمْ قَالَ اللَّهُ مِنْ
قَبْلُ ۖ فَسَيَقُولُونَ بَلْ تَحْسُدُونَنَا ط بَلْ كَانُوا لَا يَفْقَهُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
﴿١٥﴾ قُلْ لِلْمُخَلَّفِينَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعُونَ إِلَى قَوْمٍ أُولَىٰ بَأْسٍ
شَدِيدٍ تُقَاتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسْلِمُونَ ۖ فَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا يُؤْتِكُمُ اللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ۖ

وَأِنْ تَوَلَّوْا كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦﴾ لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ يُعَذِّبْهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٧﴾

And those who remained behind will say, when you will proceed to the spoils (of war) to receive them, "Let us follow you." They wish to change the statement of Allah. Say, "You shall not follow us. Allah had said like this beforehand." Then they will say, "No, but you are jealous of us." On the contrary, they do not understand (the reality) but a little. [15] Say to those of the Bedouins who remained behind, "You will be called against a people possessed of strong fighting power; you will have to fight them, or they will submit. So if you obey, Allah will give you a good reward, and if you turn away, as you had turned away before, He will punish you with a painful punishment. [16] There is no blame on the blind, nor is there any blame on the lame, nor is there any blame on the sick. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will admit him to the gardens beneath which rivers flow. And whoever turns away, He will punish him with a painful punishment. [17]

Injunctions and Related Issues

The reference in this passage is to the incident which took place in the 7th year of Hijrah after the Holy Prophet ﷺ returned from Hudaibiyah. When he intended to march on Khaibar, he took with him only those sincere Muslims who were with him at Hudaibiyah and participated in the Pledge of Ridwān. When Allah promised His Messenger the conquest of Khaibar and great spoils, those Bedouin tribes who had contrived to remain behind when the Holy Prophet ﷺ went for 'Umrah, requested the Holy Prophet ﷺ to be allowed to join the Muslim army, either because they guessed that Khaibar would be conquered and they would receive a good share of the booty, or because they perceived the divine blessings bestowed on the Muslims as a result of the expedition of Hudaibiah' and being remorseful on their wrong decision, they intended to join the new expedition. In response to their request, the Qur'an says: يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُبَدِّلُوا كَلِمَ اللَّهِ "They wish to change the statement of Allah..."[48:15]" 'Allah's

statement' refers to the injunction that the right to participate in the expedition of Khaibar and receiving a share in its spoils is reserved exclusively for those sincere Muslims who were with the Holy Prophet ﷺ at Ḥudaibiyah. The same injunction is again referred to by saying, كَذَلِكَ قَالَ اللَّهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ "Allah had said like this beforehand.... [48:15]" It means that the injunction of restricting the right of participation in Khyber to the participants of Hudaibiah had been revealed by Allah before the revelation of these verses. However, this injunction is not available in the Qur'ān anywhere else. So the question is: how is it then correct to refer this injunction as a 'statement of Allah' or as 'Allah has said like this'? Answer to this question depends on understanding the different kinds of the divine revelation which follow:

Divine Revelation is not restricted to the Qur'ān; Many injunctions are revealed without being a part of the Qur'ān, and Prophetic *aḥādīth* have also the status of being 'Allah's injunctions'

Waḥy [revelation] is divisible into two types: [1] *Waḥy Matluww* or recited revelation; and [2] *Waḥy Ghayr-Matluww* or unrecited revelation. *Waḥy Matluww* refers to the Qur'ān - the words and meanings of which are both from Allah. *Waḥy Ghayr-Matluww* refers to the Ḥadīth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ - the wordings of which are from the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the meanings of which are from Allah (See Ma'āriful Qur'ān: Vol. 2/570). *Waḥy Ghayr-Matluww*, like *Waḥy Matluww*, is one of the fundamental sources of Islamic injunctions.

With this juristic principle in mind, scholars have explained that the restrictive injunction made to the participants of Ḥudaibiyah is nowhere asserted explicitly in the Qur'ān or *Waḥy Matluww*. However, it was made for them to the Holy Prophet ﷺ through *Waḥy Ghayr-Matluww* on his way to Ḥudaibiyah to which the Qur'ān refers by the phrases *Kalāmullah* (the statement of Allah) and *qālallāh* (Allah said). From this a general juristic rule may be deduced that the injunctions entrenched in *aḥādīth ṣaḥīḥah* [Authentic Prophetic Traditions] have the status of being 'Allah's statement' and 'Allah's saying'. These verses are sufficient to unmask the deviation of those who turned aside from the truth by refusing to accept *aḥādīth* as a religious authority.

Some people have tried to argue that the restrictive injunction is found in the Qur'an itself, that is in verses 18 and 19 of this very Sūrah "so He sent down tranquillity upon them, and rewarded them with a well-nigh victory, and many spoils that they would receive." This verse was revealed in the beginning of the journey to Ḥudaibiah, and "well-nigh victory" refers, according to consensus of Qur'ānic scholars, to the victory of Khaibar. Thus the phrases *Kalāmullah* (the statement of Allah) and *qālallāh* (Allah said) could refer to verses 18 and 19, and it is not necessary that it is construed as an injunction conveyed through *Waḥy Ghayr-Matluww*. But this argument is misconceived because verse 18 and 19 contain a promise that the participants of Ḥudaibiah would receive many spoils in the victory of Khaibar, but it is nowhere mentioned in these verses that these spoils will be restricted to the participants of Hudaibiah and no one else will participate in them. Therefore, No doubt, this restriction was made by *Waḥy Ghayr-Matluww* or the Ḥadīth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which is meant by the Qur'ānic phrases *Kalāmullah* and *qālallāh*.

Some people have applied the words, 'the statement of Allah' occurring in verse 15 to verse 83 of Sūrah At-Taubah:

فَاسْتَادُّنُوكَ لِلْخُرُوجِ فَقُلْ لَّنْ تَخْرُجُوا مَعِيَ أَبَدًا وَلَنْ تُقَاتِلُوا مَعِيَ عَدُوًّا إِنَّكُمْ رَضِيتُمْ بِالْقُعُودِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ

They sought disorder even earlier and tried to upset matters for you, until the Truth arrived and the will of Allah prevailed, though they disliked it. [Sūrah Taubah: 48]

This is not true, because the verses of Sūrah At-Taubah pertain to the battle of Tabūk which took place in the 9th year of Hijrah whereas the expedition of Khaibar took place two years earlier in the 7th year of Hijrah (Qurtubī; and others).

فُلْ لَّنْ تَبِيعُونَا ("...say: 'You shall not follow us' - 48:15".) In this clause, the laggards who contrived to be left behind are emphatically told that they could not be allowed to march against the Jews of Khaibar and partake of the booty. However, this prohibition is restricted to the expedition of Khaibar, but in the near future they would be allowed to fight other battles. This is the reason why from among the laggards, the tribes of Muzainah and Juhainah later on fought in the company of the Holy

Prophet ﷺ (al-Rūḥ citing from al-Baḥr; Bayān).

Some of the Laggards Repent and Become Sincere Muslims

All the laggards that did not march towards Ḥudaibiyah were prohibited from taking part in the expedition of Khaibar, whereas not all of them were hypocrites, some were sincere Muslims. And some at that particular time were hypocrites, but later on, through the Grace of Allah, they became sincere Muslims. Verse [16] consoles and comforts the laggards that though, because of Allah's promise made to the participants of Ḥudaibiyah, they cannot be allowed to take part in the expedition of Khaibar, yet in the near future the sincere Muslims would be called upon to fight against much more powerful enemies. Thus the Qur'ān predicts "سَتَدْعُونَ إِلَى قَوْمٍ أُولَىٰ بِأَسْ شَدِيدٍ تَقَاتُلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسْلِمُونَ" You will be called against a people possessed of strong fighting power; you will have to fight them, or they will submit". (48:16)

We need to bear in mind the verse foretells that they will be invited to take part in battles that will be fought against a formidable militant nation. Islamic history bears ample testimony to the fact that this prediction was not fulfilled during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There are several reasons for this. First of all, though battles did take place during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet ﷺ after the expedition of Khaibar, there is no proof that the Holy Prophet ﷺ called upon the Bedouins to fight. Secondly, after that no battle took place with such a nation whose fighters were so brave, chivalrous and formidable as the Qur'ān describes. Although in the battle of Tabūk the encounter was with a formidable force, neither is there any evidence that the Bedouins were invited to fight, nor did any actual fighting take place in Tabūk, because Allah had infused terror in the minds of the opponents, and they did not turn up. As far as the battle of Ḥunain is concerned, there is no proof of their being invited, nor was the opponent so powerful. Therefore, some of the leading scholars of Tafsīr express the view that the prediction in the verse refers to the fierce and protracted wars with the Byzantine and Iranian empires which took place during the reign of Sayyidnā Al-Farūq-ul-A'ẓam (Ibn 'Abba, 'Ata, Mujāhid, Ibn Abī Laila, and Hasan in Qurṭubī'). Sayyidnā Rāfi' Ibn Khadij (رحمته الله) says: " We read this verse in the Qur'ān in which the word 'qawm' (people) occurs, but we did not know to which 'qawm' reference is made, until after the Holy Prophet ﷺ when Abū Bakr

Ṣiddīq ﷺ took over the reign of Caliphate and invited us to take up arms against Banū Ḥanīfah, the people of Yamāmah, that is, Musailimah Al-Kadhdhāb. So we thought the Qur'an refers to this 'qawm' (people)." However, there is no conflict or contradiction between these views. The word 'qawm' (people) could comprehend all these nations. Having cited all these views, Imām Qurṭubī asserts that this verse confirms the legitimacy of the Caliphate of Sayyidnā Abū Bakr and Sayyidnā 'Umar ﷺ. The Qur'an itself asserts in the above-quoted verse their calling upon the people to fight.

تَقَاتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسَلِّمُوا ("...you will have to fight them, or they will submit") According to the *qirā'ah* (reading) of Sayyidnā 'Ubaiyy ﷺ in the second disjunctive clause *أَوْ يُسَلِّمُوا* *au yuslimū* the *nūn* has been omitted. Therefore, Imām Qurṭubī takes the disjunctive particle *au* originally standing for "or" in the sense of *hattā* (until). In other words, the fighting will carry on with that nation until they surrender - whether by embracing Islam or by submitting to the Islamic rule.

لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرَجٌ (There is no blame on the blind, nor is there any blame on the lame, nor is there any blame on the sick...48:17) Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ﷺ reports that when some sincere Muslimss who were physically unable to fight read the concluding clause of verse 16: *وَأِنْ تَوَلَّوْا* "And if you turn away, as you had turned away before, He will punish you with a painful punishment. [48:16]" they expressed their concern about the warning. Verse [17] was revealed to exempt them from the injunction of *jihād*. These people included blind, lame or sick persons (Qurṭubī). And Allah knows best!

Verses 18 - 21

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ﴿١٨﴾ وَمَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً يَأْخُذُونَهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٩﴾ وَعَدَّكُمْ اللَّهُ مَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً يَأْخُذُونَهَا فَعَجَّلَ لَكُمْ هَذِهِ وَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَ النَّاسِ عَنْكُمْ ۚ وَلِتَكُونَ آيَةً لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ﴿٢٠﴾

وَأُخْرَى لَمْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهَا قَدْ أَحَاطَ اللَّهُ بِهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

Allah was pleased with the believers when they were pledging allegiance with you by placing their hands in your hands under the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquility upon them, and rewarded them with a well-nigh victory, [18] and many spoils that they would receive. And Allah is Mighty, Wise. [19] Allah had promised you many spoils that you would receive, so He gave these to you sooner, and stopped the hands of the people from (harming) you. And (He did this) so that it becomes a sign for the believers, and so that He guides you to the right path. [20] And (there are) other (victories) that have not come within your power as yet, (but) Allah has encompassed them. And Allah is Powerful over every thing. [21]

Commentary

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ (Allah was pleased with the believers when they were pledging allegiance with you by placing their hands in your hands under the tree,...48:18). The reference in this verse is to the same pledge that was given at Hudaibiyah and which was referred to earlier in verse 10. Verse [18] reinforces verse [10.]. In verse [18] Allah announces that those sincere participants who took this solemn oath have obtained His pleasure. Therefore, the oath came to be known as *bai'at-ur-Ridwān* (that is, the pledge that earned Allah's pleasure). The purpose of this is to compliment the participants of the allegiance and to emphasise the obligation of fulfilling the covenant. It is recorded in Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Sayyidnā Jābir رضي الله عنه that on the day of Hudaibiyah, the companions were 1400 people, and the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to them: "أَنْتُمْ خَيْرُ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ" "You are the best of people living on the surface of the earth." It is recorded in Muslim on the authority of Umm Bishr رضي الله عنها that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, "لَا يَدْخُلُ النَّارَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْ بَايَعْتَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ" "None of those who swore fealty under the tree will enter the Fire" (Maḥzarī). Therefore, the participants of this allegiance are like the participants of the battle of Badr. The Qur'ān and Ḥadīth give glad tidings of Allah's pleasure and Paradise to the participants of the battle of Badr. Likewise the sources give glad tidings of Allah's pleasure and

Paradise to the participants of *bai'at-ur-Riḍwān*. These tidings bear testimony to the fact that these sincere participants meet their end in the state of faith, righteousness, and with deeds that please Allah, because this announcement of Allah's pleasure guarantees that.

Vilification of, and Finding Fault with, the Noble Companions Prohibited

Tafsīr Mazharī says that the noble Companions are among the best of the Prophet's ﷺ followers, and as such Allah has announced forgiveness of their sins, shortcomings and slips - if they committed any. Therefore, it is against the declaration of this verse to investigate into those of their deeds that are not laudable, and to make it a subject of debate. It is also a crystal clear denunciation of the attitude of *Rawāfiḍ*, the Shi'ites, who reject the legitimacy of the caliphs Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān, ﷺ and vilify them and other blessed Companions - condemning them as unbelievers and hypocrites.

The Tree of *Riḍwān*

The tree that is mentioned in this verse refers to *mimosa arabica* or the gum-acacia tree. It is reported that after the Holy Prophet ﷺ some people used to take walk there and perform *ṣalāh*. Sayyidnā 'Umar ﷺ came to know about this and feared that the future generation lacking in knowledge might start worshipping the very tree, as it happened in the past generations. Therefore, he had the tree felled. However, it is recorded in Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Sayyidnā Ṭāriq Ibn 'Abdur-Raḥmān ﷺ who reports: "I once went for Ḥajj, and I passed by some people who had gathered in a place and were performing *ṣalāh*. I asked them: 'Which mosque is this?'. They replied: 'This is the tree under which the Holy Prophet ﷺ took *bai'at-ur-Riḍwān*.' After that I went up to Sayyidnā Sa'īd Ibn Muṣayyab ﷺ and narrated this incident to him. He said: 'My father was one of those who participated in *bai'at-ur-Riḍwān*. He said to me that when he went to Makkah the following year he looked for the tree, but could not find it.' Then Sayyidnā Sa'īd Ibn Muṣayyab ﷺ added: 'Companions who participated in *bai'at-ur-Riḍwān* at the hands of the Holy Prophet ﷺ themselves are unaware of the location of the tree, but it is strange that you should know about it. Are you more knowledgeable than they are?' (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī). This goes to show that later on people must have determined conjecturally -

based on incomplete and doubtful evidence - about a particular tree that it was the tree under which the pledge was taken. As a result, they frequented the place and performed *ṣalāh*. Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ knew that it was not the real tree. Then he apprehended people's involvement in shirk. Therefore, he had the tree felled.

Conquest of Khaibar

Khaibar is the name of a province which comprises many settlements, fortresses and gardens (Maẓharī). Verse 18 refers to the victory of Khaibar by saying, "وَأَنَّا لَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا" and rewarded them with a well-nigh victory, ". There is consensus of the scholars on that 'well-nigh victory' in this verse means the victory of Khaibar which occurred after returning from Ḥudaibiyah. According to some versions, the Holy Prophet ﷺ stayed in Madinah after returning from Ḥudaibiyah only for ten days, and according to other versions, he stayed for twenty days. Then he marched against Khaibar. According to Ibn Ishāq's version, he returned to Madīnah in the month of Dhulḥijjah and set out for Khaibar in the month of Muḥarram in the 7th year of Hijrah.

Khaibar was conquered in the month of Ṣafar in the 7th year of Hijrah. This is reported by Waqidī's Maghāzī. According to Ḥāfiẓ Ibn-Hajar, this is the preferred opinion. (Tafsīr Maẓharī)

In any case, this shows that the conquest of Khaibar took place many days after the march to Ḥudaibiyah. According to consensus of scholarly opinion, Sūrah Al-Fath was revealed in the course of his return journey from Hudaibiya. However, there is a difference of opinion whether the Sūrah was revealed in its entirety or some of its verses were revealed later. If the first view is preferred, then the conquest of Khaibar is a prophecy that Muslims will definitely achieve and is described in past perfect tense to denote that it is as certain as an event that has already happened in the past. If the second view is preferred, it is possible that these verses were revealed after the conquest of Khaibar. Allah knows best!

وَمَعَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً يَأْخُذُونَهَا (and many spoils that they would receive...48:19) This clause refers to the great booty that fell into the hands of Muslims during the conquest of Khaibar.

وَعَدَكُمُ اللَّهُ مَعَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً تَأْخُذُونَهَا فَعَجَّلَ لَكُمْ هَذِهِ (Allah had promised you many

spoils that you would receive, so He gave these to you sooner - 48:20). The phrase "many spoils" mentioned here refers to the sizeable spoils that fell into the hands of Muslims in the conquests which followed the victory at Khaibar, in the rest of Arabia and the neighbouring countries. This verse embodies a prophecy that Muslims will achieve other great victories after the victory of Khaibar, and in consequence many spoils until the end of the world. However, before those numerous conquests, the conquest of Khaibar was given first, the spoils of which were reserved by Allah exclusively for the participants of Hudaibiyah. But the spoils to be achieved in all the next conquest would be common to all. This shows that the injunction of reserving the right of participating in Khaibar is not laid down explicitly in these verses. That injunction was laid down, as detailed earlier, in a separate category of revelation, that is, in the unrecited revelation. The Holy Prophet ﷺ acted upon the injunction and imparted its knowledge to the noble Companions.

وَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَ النَّاسِ عَنْكُمْ (...and stopped the hands of the people from (harming) you. ... 48:20). This refers to the unbelievers of Khaibar. In this battle, Allah did not allow them the opportunity to show much strength or force. Imām Baghawī says that the tribe of *Ghatafān* was the ally of the Jews of Khaibar. When it heard of the Holy Prophet's march against the Jews of Khaibar, it equipped itself with heavy arms to defend the Jews. But Allah infused terror into their minds, and they were worried that if they went forward, it was possible that a Muslim army might attack their homes in their absence. As a result, they got cold feet and did not have the courage to proceed (Mazharī).

وَيَهْدِيكُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا (...And (He did this) so that He guides you to the right path.... 48:20) It is clarified earlier (in the commentary on verse 2 of this Sūrah that there are several degrees of guidance. From that point of view, they were all already guided on the straight path. Here it refers to the degree of guidance which they had not yet attained, that is, full reliance on Allah and increase in the power of faith.

وَأُخْرَى لَمْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهَا قَدْ أَحَاطَ اللَّهُ بِهَا (And (there are) other (victories) that have not come within your power as yet, (but) Allah has encompassed them...." (48:21). This verse embodies a prophecy that Muslims will achieve many more great victories after the victory of Khaibar. But Allah says that they were unable to achieve them at that time; they would happen in

future. Among these victories, Makkah was the first one to be achieved. Therefore, some scholars refer this to the victory of Makkah. However, the wordings are general and refer to all the victories that will be achieved till the end of the world (Maẓharī).

Verses 22 - 26

وَلَوْ قَاتَلَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوَلَّوْا الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا وَلَا
 نَصِيرًا ﴿٢٢﴾ سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۖ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ
 اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٣﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ
 بِبَطْنِ مَكَّةَ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ أَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
 بَصِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾ هُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
 وَالْهَدْيِ مَعْكُوفًا أَنْ يَبْلُغَ مَحِلَّهُ ۗ وَلَوْلَا رِجَالٌ مُؤْمِنُونَ وَنِسَاءٌ
 مُؤْمِنَاتٌ لَمْ تَعْلَمُوهُمْ أَنْ تَطَّوَّهُمْ فِتْصِيْبِكُمْ مِنْهُمْ مَعَرَّةٌ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۚ
 لِيُدْخِلَ اللَّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ لَو تَزَيَّلُوا لَعَذَّبْنَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
 مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٢٥﴾ إِذْ جَعَلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْحَمِيَّةَ
 حَمِيَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
 وَالزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَى وَكَانُوا أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ
 شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٢٦﴾

And had the disbelievers fought you, they would have certainly turned their backs, then they would have found neither a supporter nor a helper - [22] - according to the consistent practice of Allah that went on since before, and you will never find a change in Allah's consistent practice. [23] And He is the One who restrained their hands from you and your hands from them in the valley of Makkah after He had let you prevail over them, and Allah is watchful over what you do. [24] They are those who disbelieved and prevented you from the Sacred Mosque (Al-Masjid-ul-Ḥarām), and

(prevented) the sacrificial animals that were detained from reaching their due place. And (Allah would have allowed you to fight,) had there not been believing men and believing women whom you did not know that you might have trampled them, and thus an embarrassing situation might have befallen you because of them unknowingly, (but this was avoided) so that Allah may admit to His mercy whom He wills. And if they (the believing men and women) had been separate (from disbelievers), We would surely have punished those of them who disbelieved with a painful punishment. [25] When the disbelievers developed in their hearts indignation, the indignation of ignorance; then Allah sent down tranquility from Himself upon His Messenger and upon the believers, and made them stick to the word of piety, and they were very much entitled to it, and competent for it. And Allah is All-Knowing about every thing. [26]

Commentary

بَطْنِ مَكَّةَ (...in the valley of Makkah...) The Arabic word used here is *baṭn* which means 'belly' and in relation to a city, it refers to its center. However, in the present context it is used for Ḥudaibiyah, because of its close proximity to Makkah. This supports the Ḥanafī view that some parts of Ḥudaibiyah are included in the *ḥaram*. The relevant details may be found in our commentary on the verse 2:196.

فَتَضَيَّقَكُمْ مِنْهُمْ مَعَرَّةً بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ (and thus an embarrassing situation might have befallen you because of them unknowingly....48:25): According to some authorities on lexicology *ma'arrah* connotes "sin"; according to others it means "*harm*"; and other authorities say it denotes "shame" or "embarrassment". In this context, apparently the last meaning appears to be apt. There was a nucleus of Muslims in Makkah and if the fight had broken out, Muslim army would have unwittingly killed their own Muslim brethren in faith, thereby causing great injury to their own cause, and incurring *obloquy* and *opprobrium* for themselves.

Natural Safeguard of the Noble Companions against Mistakes

Imām Qurtubī says that if a Muslim unknowingly kills another Muslim, it is not a sin or crime. It is, however, certainly a source of shame, embarrassment and regret. Since it is a *Qatl Khata'*, the laws of *diyah* [blood-wit] will apply. Allah has protected the noble Companions against

this as well. This shows the noble Companions are not infallible like the prophets of Allah, but Allah has in general terms safeguarded them in a natural way against mistakes which would be a cause of embarrassment, obloquy and opprobrium to them.

لِيُدْخِلَ اللَّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ (so that Allah may admit to His mercy whom He wills...48:25): It means that Allah infused patience in Muslims on this occasion to avoid war, because He knew that many people in future would embrace Islam on whom His mercy will be showered. Similarly the nucleus of Muslims who were detained in Makkah will also receive a large share of His mercy.

لَوْ تَرَىٰٓهُمْ (And if they [the believing men and women] had been separate, [from disbelievers], We would surely have punished those of them who disbelieved....48:25) Lexically, the word *tazayyul* denotes 'separation'. The sense is that if Muslims detained in Makkah had been separate and distinct from the unbelievers, the Muslims coming from Madīnah would have been able to save them in case of war, and Allah would have had the disbelievers punished then and there, because that was the demand of their attitude. However, the Makkan society at that time was a mixed society - helpless Muslim men and women and non-Muslims were living together. The Muslims were indistinguishable from non-Muslims. If fighting had broken out, there would have been no way to save the Muslims. Therefore, Allah averted the war.

وَالزَّمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَىٰ وَكَانُوا أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا (and made them stick to the word of piety, and they were very much entitled to it, and competent for it - 48:26)". The construction *kalimat-at-taqwā* connotes the word of the pious persons, that is, the *Kalimah* of *Tauḥīd* and *Risālah* whereby a person declares his faith in Allah's Oneness and in the Messengership of Sayyidnā Muḥammad ﷺ. It is named here as 'word of piety' because this word is the foundation of piety, righteousness and right conduct. The noble Companions here are said to have better right to it and more worthy of it, and thus Allah exposed and unmasked those people who accused them of infidelity and hypocrisy. Allah asserts that the noble Companions are more worthy of the word of Islam and better entitled to it, and thus made them adhere to it firmly, whereas the wretched evil-minded people refuse to acknowledge their value and entitlement.

Verses 27 - 29

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّءْيَا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ آمِنِينَ ۚ مُحَلِّقِينَ رُءُوسَكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ ۚ لَا تَخَافُونَ ۗ فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا فَجَعَلَ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ﴿٢٧﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ ۗ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٢٨﴾ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا ۚ سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ۗ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ ۖ وَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ ۖ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيُغَيِّظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ ۗ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

Indeed, Allah has made true to His Messenger the dream (shown) with truth: You will most definitely enter the Sacred Mosque inshaallah (if Allah wills,) peacefully, with your heads shaved, and your hairs cut short, having no fear. So He knew what you did not know, and He assigned before that a well-nigh victory. [27] He is the One who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the religion of truth, so that He makes it prevail over all religions. And Allah suffices as a witness. [28] Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are hard against the disbelievers, compassionate among themselves; you will see them bowing down in Rukū', prostrating in Sajdah, seeking bounty from Allah and (His) good pleasure; their distinguishing feature is on their faces from the effect of Sajdah (prostration). This is their description in the Torah; and their description in the Injil is: like a sown crop that brings forth its shoot, then makes it strong, then it grows thick and stands straight on its stem, looking good to the farmers, – so that He may enrage the disbelievers through them. Allah has promised forgiveness and a huge reward to those of them who

believe and do good deeds. [29]

Recapitulation of the Event of Ḥudaibiyah

When the Peace Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah was completed, it was decided that the Muslims would not enter Makkah that year, and would return to Madīnah without performing 'Umrah. They were highly upset at this, because the blessed Companions' determination to perform 'Umrah was on account of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ vision, which is also a kind of revelation. The fact that everything was apparently happening contrary to the vision, they could not understand how the Holy Prophet's ﷺ journey had served its purpose. Some of the noble Companions, as a result, began to doubt, God forbid!, whether the vision was not fulfilled. The non-believers and hypocrites, on the other hand, taunted the believers that their Prophet's dream was not translated into reality. At this, the current set of verses was revealed (Transmitted by Baihaqī and others from Mujāhid).

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّؤْيَا بِالْحَقِّ (Indeed, Allah has made true to His Messenger the dream (shown) with truth...48:27). *Ṣidq* [truth] is, lexically, the antonym of *kidhb* [lie or falsehood]. Both these words are used for statements. If a statement is conformable to existing fact or reality, it is *ṣidq*. If it lacks accord with fact or reality, it is *kidhb*. Sometimes this word is used in relation to actions. In that case the word connotes the realization of an action, as for instance in [33:23], رَجُلًا صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ (Among the believers are men who were true to their covenant with Allah;...). In this case the word *ṣidq* takes two grammatical objects, as in this verse the first object of the verb *ṣadaqa* is *rasūlahū* and its second object is *ru'yā*. The verse says that Allah has made true the dream. Here the event that was to take place in future has been expressed in the past perfect tense because of its certainty of occurrence. A reinforcing context that this event is definitely going to take place in future is expressed in energetic aorist thus: "لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ" You will most definitely enter the Sacred Mosque." (The construction under analysis *la-tadkhulu-nna* is made up of the following constituents: The corroborative *la* is prefixed to the aorist denoting "Certainly" + the doubled energetic or corroborative *nun* reinforcing the sense of "most definitely" appended as a suffix to the future tense *tadkhulu* "you shall most definitely enter"). That is to say, the vision you had seen that you

Have entered the sacred Mosque will most definitely happen. It will not happen this year. It will happen at a future date. The date had not been specified in the dream. The blessed Companions in their enthusiasm made up their mind to set out for the journey that very year, and the Holy Prophet ﷺ concurred with their determination. There was much Divine wisdom in it which became manifest at the time of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah and served many useful purposes to which reference is already made. For example, when Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ questioned the whole situation and expressed his doubt, Sayyidnā Abū Bakr ؓ allayed his suspicions and misgivings. He said no particular date and year was specified in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ vision. If it did not happen now, it does not matter; it will happen at some other time (Qurtubī).

Importance of *insha-allāh* for the Performance of Future Works

In this verse Allah promises the Muslims that they will most definitely enter the sacred precincts of Makkah at a future time, and in making His promise He employed the phrase *إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ insha-allāh* [If Allah wills or God willing]. Allah being fully aware of His Will, there was no need for Him to have used the phrase, yet He used it (Qurtubī). This has been done for the purpose of teaching the Messenger and the people the importance of *insha-allāh*. (Qurtubī)

مُحَلِّقِينَ رُءُوسَكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ (...your heads shaved, your hair cut short... 48:27). It is recorded in Bukhārī that when 'Umrah that was missed in the sixth year of Hijrah was performed in Dhul Qa'dah of the following year [7 .H.] and came to be known in history as 'Umrat-ul-Qaḍā', Sayyidnā Mu'āwiyah ؓ says he trimmed the blessed hair of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with a pair of scissors. This incident took place in 'Umrat-ul-Qaḍā', not in *hajja-tul-wadā'* [farewell pilgrimage] because on the latter occasion he had his head shaved (Qurtubī).

فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا (So He knew what you did not know....48:27). It was within Allah's power to have allowed the Muslims to enter the sacred Mosque and perform their 'Umrah that very year. However, there was great wisdom in deferring it until the following year which Allah only knew and the Muslims generally did not know. Among these benefits was the conquest of Khaibar which Allah had willed must be achieved first, so that the Muslims may become a powerful force in terms of material resources. This would make it possible for them to perform their 'Umrah

peacefully and with tranquility. Thus the Qur'an says: فَجَعَلَ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا (and He assigned before that a well-nigh victory.) [27]" *Dūna dhālika* (before that) in this context stands for *Dunar-ru'yā*, that is to say, before the fulfilment of this vision, the Muslims must achieve the conquest of Khaibar which is near at hand.* Some scholars have expressed the view that *fathān qarīban* [nigh victory] refers to the Peace Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah itself, because that opened the gate for the victory of Makkah and all subsequent victories. Eventually, all the noble Companions acknowledged the Treaty to be the greatest of all victories. The meaning of the verse would be: you did not know what wisdom and good lay hidden in your determination to march, then your apparent failure to accomplish it, and eventually in reaching a peace settlement the terms of which seemed to be hurtful to your self-respect but Allah was fully acquainted with it. He had ordained that before the Holy Prophet's ﷺ vision should manifest itself, you might be blessed with another victory in the form of the Peace Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah - a victory near at hand. As a result of this victory, it was seen by all that while on the occasion of Ḥudaibiyah the noble Companions did not number more than 1500, later they increased in number to about 10000 (Qurṭubī).

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ (He is the One who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the religion of truth, so that He makes it prevail over all religions....48:28). In the preceding verses, promises were made about conquests and spoils of war; reference was made to the special merits of the participants of Ḥudaibiyah and general merits of all the noble Companions; and glad tidings were given to them. Now at the conclusion of the Sūrah all these themes are summarized and emphasized. Because these blessings were showered and the glad tidings were given as a result of accepting and obeying the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the verse lays further stress on strengthening the acceptance and obedience of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It also denounces those who reject the messengership of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and allays suspicions of those Muslims who were dissatisfied with the terms and provisions of the Treaty

*. This was necessary because the Jews of Khaibar always conspired with the disbelievers of Makkah against the Holy Prophet ﷺ who was encircled by the Makkans from the South, and by the Jews of Khaibar from the North. Any possible battle with any of them would entail the danger from the backside. The Treaty of Hudaibiah made the South safe for the Muslims, and they were able to conquer Khaibar on the North without any fear from their back. (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

of Ḥudaibiyah. The verse in addition confirms the messengership of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and, giving glad tidings, makes a very bold prophecy to the effect that not only would Islam prevail in Arabia but would also eventually triumph over all other religions.

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah...48:29). The general style of the Qur'ān is that, instead of referring to the Holy Prophet ﷺ by his name, he is normally called by one or another of his characteristic or attributive names especially in vocative cases, as for example, *yā ayyuhan-nabiyyu*, *yā ayyuhar-rasūlu*, *yā ayyuhal-muzzammilu* and so on, unlike other prophets who are addressed by their personal names, as for instance, *yā ibrahīmu*, *yā mūsā*, *yā 'īsā*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is addressed four times only in the entire Qur'ān by his personal name Muḥammad. This is done only where there is a special reason for it. Here the reason is that when at Ḥudaibiyah, the Peace Treaty was being written, the unbelievers had objected to the use of the characteristic or attributive name [*rasūlul-lāh*] with the personal name of the Messenger of Allah. The pagan Quraish wiped off Muḥammad *rasūl-ul-lāh*, and insisted that it be replaced with Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdullāh. By the command of Allah, the Messenger accepted it. However, Allah on this occasion, in the Qur'ān, especially attached the characteristic phrase *rasūlul-lāh* [Messenger of Allah] to his personal name [Muḥammad] and thus entrenched it permanently in His Last Book, the Holy Qur'ān, so that it will be written and recited like that until the Judgement Day.

(...and الَّذِينَ مَعَهُ اشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا those who are with him are hard against the disbelievers, compassionate among themselves; you will see them bowing down in *ruku'*, prostrating in *sajdah*, seeking bounty from Allah and (His) good pleasure;.... 48:29). From this point onwards the merits of the noble Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are described. Although the immediate addressees of the verse are the noble participants of Ḥudaibiyah and *bai'at-ur-Riḍwān*. But on account of the generality of words, all blessed Companions are included in the description, because a *ṣaḥābī* or Companion is one who embraced Islam, saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ and accompanied him, even for a short time.

The Qualities, Merits and Special Marks of the Noble Companions

Allah Ta'ālā, on this occasion, describes the messengership of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and makes a prophecy to the effect that not only would Islam prevail in Arabia, but would also eventually triumph over all other religions. In addition, He has described the qualities, the merits and the special marks of the noble Companions ﷺ. The severe test which they had to undergo at the time of the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah has also been described. The passage describes that they never wavered from the path of rectitude despite the fact that the Treaty was against their firm belief and heart-felt emotions, and despite the fact that they could not enter the sacred Mosque, and had to return without performing 'Umrah. In these unfavourable circumstances, they displayed an unusual obedience of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and their strength of faith. The blessed Companions have been described here fully, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ is the Final Messenger and there shall be no prophet or messenger after him. He left behind him the Book of Allah and the paradigm of noble Companions to follow. Specific injunctions have been laid down to emulate their pattern of life. Therefore, the Qur'ān too describes the merits of the blessed Companions, and encourages and emphasizes to follow their model of life.

The first quality of the Companions mentioned here is that they are hard against the unbelievers, and merciful to one another. It was proven time and again that they were harsh against the unbelievers. They sacrificed all their ethnic and tribal relations for the sake of Islam. This was especially demonstrated on the occasion of Ḥudaibiyah. The tenderness of the blessed Companions was especially demonstrated when Islamic brotherhood [*mu'ākhāt*] was created between *muhājirs* [emigrants from Makkah] and *anṣār* [helpers from Madīnah]. Anṣār invited the *muhājirīn* to share with them in their holdings. The Qur'ān describes this quality of the blessed Companions first, because nothing they practiced - whether friendship or enmity, love or hatred - was for any selfish reasons. Everything was for the sake of Allah and His Messenger - and this is the highest degree of perfect faith. In a Ḥadīth recorded by Bukhārī, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said,

من أحبَّ لله وابتغى الله فقد استكمل إيمانه

"He who loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of

Allah has attained the highest degree of faith."

This means that anyone who has subjugated his friendship, love, hatred and enmity under the Will of Allah has perfected his faith. This clarifies another point: The Companions' being hard against the unbelievers does not imply that they were never tender towards any non-believer. In fact it means that where Allah and His Messenger enjoins them to be hard against the non-believers, they would simply comply without taking into account the relations of kinship or friendship. As far as kind and equitable dealing with them is concerned, the Qur'an itself promulgates:

لَا يَنْهٰكُمْ اللّٰهُ عَنِ الَّذِيْنَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوْكُمْ فِى الدِّيْنِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوْكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ

"Allah does not forbid you from those who did not fight you on account of faith, and did not expel you from your homes, that you do good to them, and deal justly with them." (60:8).

There is a large number of incidents where Allah's Messenger and the blessed Companions displayed their kindness and compassion to the helpless and needy unbelievers. Treating them with justice and equity is the general injunction of Islam. No activity flouting justice and equity is permissible even in the field of pitched battle.

The second quality of the blessed Companions is that they are generally preoccupied with bowing and prostrating. The first quality is the mark of their perfection in faith and the second quality is the mark of their perfection in deeds, because *ṣalāh* is the most meritorious of all the good deeds.

سَيَمَاهُمْ فِى وُجُوْهِهِمْ مِّنْ اَثْرِ السُّجُوْدِ (their distinguishing feature is on their faces from the effect of *sajdah* (prostration)...48:29). That is to say, *ṣalāh* has become such a permanent routine of their life that the special effects of *ṣalāh* and *sajdah* are evident on their faces. These distinguishing features do not necessarily refer to any physical sign on the forehead on account of constant prostration. This in fact refers to the light and brightness that is reflected naturally on the faces of the devout as a result of humility, meekness and gentleness of disposition. Particularly this is one of the effects that follow from offering *tahajjud ṣalāh* regularly. It is recorded in Ibn Majah on the authority of Syyidna Jābir رضي الله عنه that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said,

من كثر صلواته بالليل حسن وجهه بالنهار

"He who offers his *ṣalāh* abundantly at night, his face looks good during the day."

Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣrī رحمه الله تعالى has said that the "features" in the verse refer to the light that the faces of those who pray will emit on the Day of Judgement.

ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ ۖ وَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ ۖ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ
فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيُغَيِّظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ ۖ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

(This is their description in the Torah; and their description in the Injil is: like a sown crop that brings forth its shoot, then makes it strong, then it grows thick and stands straight on its stem, looking good to the farmers, so that He may enrage the disbelievers through them. Allah has promised forgiveness and a huge reward to those of them who believe and do good deeds.... 48:29)

This part of the verse states the description of the noble Companions given above about the light of their prostration and prayers on their forehead is the same description as was given in the Torah for the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. And another parable of them is put in the Gospel [*injīl*]: When a farmer sows a seed in his field, it grows over a period of time - especially so that it changes from its original form into a form which is at first weak like a thin needle, then it develops into branches getting stronger, larger and more complicated. Eventually when it is fully grown, it is the strongest of shrubs and becomes a tree. Likewise the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the beginning were very few. At one time, besides the Holy Prophet ﷺ there were only three Muslims: Among men, Sayyidnā Abū Bakr Aṣ-Ṣiddīq ؓ; among women, Sayyidah Khadijah ؓ; and among children, Sayyidnā 'Alī ؓ. Gradually, but progressively, the strength of the Muslims continued to grow, so much so that the number of the noble Companions who performed the farewell pilgrimage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ is said to be about One hundred and fifty thousand (150,000).

There are three possibilities in this verse: First, the grammatical pause be observed at *fit-tawrāh* in which case it will mean that the previous likeness, that is, the light of the faces is described in the Torah. In this

case, a grammatical pause would not be observed at *fil-injīl*, but one should proceed without stopping, and it will mean that the parable of the noble Companions in the Gospel is like a field or tree which at the beginning is very weak but gradually it grows strong.

The second possibility is that the pause be observed at *فى الإنجيل* *fil-injīl* rather than at *فى التَّوْرَةِ* *fit-tawrah*, in which case the meaning would be that the description of the light of their faces is found both in Torah and the Gospel, as here in the Qur'ān. Then *Ka-zar-in* "like a sown crop" may be treated as a separate parable.

The third possibility is that the statement does not end at *fit-tawrah* nor at *fil-injīl*. In this case *dhalika*, the demonstrative pronoun, would point to the next parable, and it would mean that the description of the Companions is given in both the Torah and the Gospel "like a sown crop". If the Torah and the Gospel had been intact in their original form, we could have compared the parables as given in those books with those given here in the Qur'ān and determined its exact meaning. However, the present-day Torah and the Gospel have been subjected to many alterations and distortions. Therefore, its true import cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. Nevertheless, most commentators prefer the first possibility according to which the first description is found in the Torah and the second parable is found in the Gospel. Imām Baghawī says that this description of the noble Companions is found in the Gospel in the following way : At the beginning they will be few in number, then the number will grow and become strong. Qatādah quotes from the Injīl as follows: "Such a people will emerge who will grow like a crop; they will enjoin good works and forbid evil works" (Maẓharī). Despite changes in the present-day Torah and Gospel, the following prophecy is found:

"He said: The Lord came from Mount Sinai; and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words." [Deut. 33:2]

As pointed out earlier, at the time of the conquest of Makkah there were 10000 Companions who entered the City of Khalīl Ibrāhīm ﷺ

(Makkah) with the embodiment of light [Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ] whose advent was from the mount Paran (in which the Cave of Ḥirā' is situated). The expression "in his hand will be a fiery sacrosanct law [Shari'ah]" probably refers to *أَشَدُّ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ* "hard against the unbelievers". The expression "he will love his people" is understood to refer to *رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ* "compassionate to one another". The details are set out together with other references in a work *Izhār-ul-ḥaq*, Vol. 3/ chap. 6: p.256. This book was written by Maulānā Raḥmatullāh Kairānwī against the Priest Fonder . In this book, the parable of Injīl is quoted as follows:

Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. [Matthew 13:31-32]

The following passage is quoted from Mark 4:26 in *Izhār-ul-ḥaq*, Vol 3/chap 6:p. 310:

And he said, so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come. (Mark 4: 27-29)(*)

The expression "kingdom of heaven" on various occasions in the Gospel seems to refer to the Final Messenger. Allah knows best!

لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ (...so that He may enrage the disbelievers through them...48:29). That is, Allah has characterized the blessed Companions by some noble qualities. He made them strong after being weak and multiplied them into large numbers after being small in numbers. Seeing the growth and expansion of Islam and Muslims, the unbelievers became furious and angry towards them, and envious of them, burning in the fire of jealousy. Abū 'Urwah Zubairi says he was sitting in one of the sessions of Imām Mālik when a person uttered a belittling statement against the blessed Companions. The Imam recited this entire verse. When he came to the clause "so that He may enrage the disbelievers through them. [29]", he

(*). These quotations are taken from King James Version of the Bible.

said this warning will apply to anyone who belittles the blessed Companions (Qurṭubī). The Imām did not say that such a person would become *kāfir*, however he said that the warning applies to such a person. It means that the conduct of such a person will be like that of unbelievers.

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (Allah has promised forgiveness and a huge reward to those of them who believe and do good deeds...48:29). The preposition *min* in the prepositional phrase *min-hum* is by consensus of Qur'ānic scholarly opinion an explicative or *min lil-bayān* or *tabyīn*. Therefore, it means that it is Allah's promise to those Muslims who are selfless in faith and strong in character that He will forgive them and give them a great reward. The preposition *min* serves to make clear and explains that all the blessed Companions - without any exception - believe and do deeds of righteousness. The second point this verse clarifies is that Allah has promised them all without any exception forgiveness and a mighty reward. *Min lil-bayān* or *tabyīn* is frequently used in the Qur'ān. For example, the command in [22:30] فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَهُ الزُّورِ "So, refrain from the filth of the idols and refrain from a word of falsehood" (22:30). In this clause, the preposition *min* explicates the obscure noun *rijs* as referring to the "idols". Likewise the prepositional phrase *min-hum* here is explicative of "those who believe". *Rawāfiq*, however, treat the preposition *min* as partitive denoting a part as distinct from the whole - meaning the promise of forgiveness and mighty reward applies only to a part of those who believed and worked deeds of righteousness. This is completely incompatible with the context and in conflict with the above verses. This verse undoubtedly comprehends all the blessed Companions. However, the immediate application of this verse is to the participants of Ḥudaibiyah and the Pledge of Ridwān. In the preceding verses Allah has announced that they have incurred His pleasure:

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ

"Allah was pleased with the believers when they were pledging allegiance with you by placing their hands in your hands under the tree,..."(18)

This verse is a guarantee that they will all be firmly established in their faith and righteousness, because Allah is All-knowing and Well-Aware of what is going to happen. If Allah knows that anyone at

anytime will turn away from the faith, He will never announce about His pleasure. Ibn 'Abdul Barr, quoting this verse in the introduction to his book *istī'āb*, writes:

ومن رضى الله عنه لم يسخط عليه ابداً

"He with whom Allah is pleased, He will never be displeased with him."

On the basis of this verse, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that no one from among the participants of the Pledge of Ridwān will ever enter the Fire. It is absolutely invalid to exclude some of those who were originally promised forgiveness and a mighty reward. Hence there is unanimity among *ummah* on the point that all the noble Companions are impartial, unbiased and worthy of confidence.

All Companions Are Inmates of Paradise: Their Sins Are Forgiven and to Belittle them is a Major Sin

Many verses of the Qur'ān bear testimony to this fact. Some of the verses are part of this Sūrah. For instance,

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

"Allah was pleased with the believers...48:29"

and

الزَّمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَىٰ وَكَانُوا أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا

"...and made them stick to the word of piety, and they were very much entitled to it, and competent for it." (48:26)

Besides, in several verses scattered in various other Sūrahs the same position has been affirmed for all the Companions:

يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِي اللَّهُ النَّبِيَّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ،

"on the Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and those who believed with him." [66:8]

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ

"As for the first and foremost of the Emigrants and the Supporters, and those who followed them in goodness, Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with him; and He has

prepared for them gardens berneath which rivers flow..."[9:100]

And in Sūrah Al-Ḥadīd, Allah has promised the Companions as follows:

وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ

"...Allah has promised Husna (the good) for each." (57:10)

And about Ḥusnā it is said in Sūrah Anbiyā':

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ

Surely, those for whom the good (news) from Us has come earlier shall be kept far away from it (the Hell) [21: 100]

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said:

خير القرون قرني ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم.

"The best of generations is my generation, then that which follows it immediately and then that which follows it immediately (Bukhārī)."

In a Ḥadīth the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: "Do not revile my Companions, for if one of you contributed as much gold as the mount 'Uḥud, it would not amount to as much as the *mudd* of one of them, or half of it (Bukhārī). A *mudd* in Arabia was a measure which, according to the Ḥanafī school of Fiqh, is equal to 1.032 litre or 815.39 grams and, according to the other three major schools, it is equal to 0.687 litre or 543 grams. Bazzār records with a sound chain of transmitters that Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: "Of all the people in the entire world Allah has chosen my Companions, and of all the Companions He has particularly chosen four for me - Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī (See Jam'ul-Fawā'id)

There is a Ḥadīth recorded in Tirmidhī on the authority of 'Abdullāh Ibn Mughaffal (رضي الله عنه). In it the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

اللَّهُ في أصحابي لا تتخذوهم غرضا من بعدى فمن أحبهم فبحبي أحبهم ومن أبغضهم فببغضي أبغضهم ومن آذاهم فقد آذاني ومن آذاني فقد آذى الله ومن آذى الله فيوشك أن يأخذه (راه الترمذى عن عبد الله بن المغفل از جمع الفوائد)

"Fear Allah, fear Allah regarding my Companions! Do not make them a target of your criticism after me. He who loves

them does so on account of my love; he who hates them does so on account of hating me; and he who injures them has injured me, and he who injures me has injured Allah. He who intends to injure Allah will soon be punished by Him."

I have written a book entitled *maqām-e-ṣaḥābah* in which I have collected relevant Qur'ānic verses and Prophetic Traditions pertaining to the status of the Companions. This book has already been published in Urdu. The 'Ummah is unanimous on the point that all the blessed Companions are righteous and worthy of confidence. The book deals elaborately with their disagreements and the civil wars that took place among them. It also explains how a Muslim critic should deal with the differences of the *ṣaḥābah* and whether it should be made a subject of debate and investigation or one should avoid commenting on them. Some of these issues to the degree necessary have been included in the commentary of Sūrah Muḥammad. Please refer to the relevant section there. Allah's help is sought and on Him is our reliance!

Alḥamdulillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah Al-Faṭḥ
Ends here